



Whitsuntide in Devizes

Monday last was generally observed as a "bank holiday" in Devizes, and the Foresters of "Court Dolphin," who assemble at the White Hart Inn, having resolved to hold a fête and gala on the occasion, Devizes resumed, to some extent, that appearance of gaiety which characterised Whit Monday in the palmy days of the old public-house clubs some forty years ago. Mr. C. Darby Griffith had been invited to provide at the inevitable dinner, but was unable, unfortunately to be present, and the club accordingly, availed themselves of Sir Thomas Bateson's kindness, and accepted him as their chairman for the day. The whole of the members of the court, in full regalia, assembled at the White Hart Inn soon after ten o'clock, and, forming in procession marched to the station, headed by the "celebrated" brass band advertised in their programme, where they waited the arrival of the 11 a.m. train, and one Borough Member. The procession then came up the station road, and paraded the town in all the magnificence of Forestry. First came a single Forester in Lincoln Green (at least, we suppose, that was the colour) mounted on a mettlesome steed, and looking very grand in boots and feathered bonnet. Then followed a number of horsemen, with swords drawn, and these were succeeded by some of the principal members of the order on foot, with Sir Thomas Bateson. Then came the splendid ne banner, recently presented to the court by Mr. C. Darby Griffith, and which is the pride of the court; then the band (a worse never came into the town at the head of a public procession), the Foresters two and two, next bold Robin Hood, reposing in a waggon covered with a bower of evergreens and flowers, with bow and arrow in hand, but evidently, from his restless change of position, not thoroughly at his ease; then more Foresters, followed by another waggon loaded with little girls, dressed in spotless muslin, and gazing with great gratification and pride on the crowd as they passed along; again more Foresters, and then a third waggon, containing the inevitable shepherd, shepherdess and lamb, and very amiable and innocent the trio looked, though the lamb seemed surprised to find itself in so novel a position. The town having been thoroughly paraded, the party proceeded to the field recently occupied by the Militia, where a spacious marquee had been erected, under shelter of which about 120 members and friends of the order, including the Mayor, ex-Mayor, Dr. Carless, Mr. Langdon, Mr. Combes, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Sloper (Elm Tree), and others sat down to and ample repast, which was provided by Brother Weston, of the Great Western Inn, to which ample justice was done. After dinner the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given and responded to, and at about 3 p.m., the public in large numbers began to enter the field in anticipation of the promised sports and games. These, with dancing, &c., occupied the remainder of the afternoon and evening, and everything went off well; we should imagine that little, if any short of 1,000 persons were present in the field, and the shades of evening only put an end to the festivities. Although the sports were, perhaps, hardly as well managed as could have been desired, the public ought to feel very much obliged to the amateurs who undertook to provide them amusements on a public holiday, and we trust the pecuniary results have been of such a gratifying nature as will induce them or some other enterprising individuals, to enter for the public amusement on the recurrence of the now popular Bank Holidays.

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